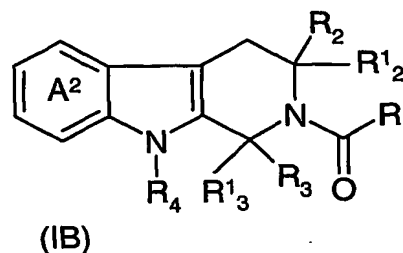
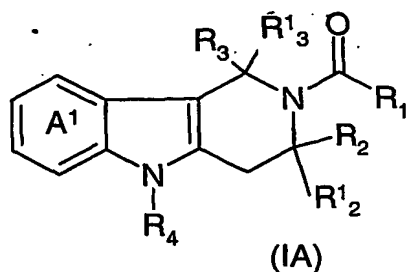


Claims:

1. A compound of formula (IA) or (IB), or a salt, hydrate or solvate thereof.



wherein

- 5 fused rings A¹ and A² are optionally substituted;

R₁ represents a radical of formula $-(\text{Alk}^1)_n-(\text{X})_m-(\text{Alk}^2)_p-\text{Z}$ wherein

Z represents a radical of formula $-\text{C}(=\text{O})\text{NH}(\text{OH})$, or $-\text{N}(\text{OH})\text{C}(=\text{O})\text{Y}$ wherein Y represents hydrogen, C₁-C₆ alkyl, a phenyl or cycloalkyl ring, or a monocyclic heterocyclic radical having 5 or 6 ring atoms;

Alk¹ represents an optionally substituted, straight or branched, C₁-C₆ alkylene radical,

- 15 Alk² represents an optionally substituted, straight or branched, C₁-C₆ alkylene, C₂-C₆ alkenylene or C₂-C₆ alkynylene radical which may optionally contain an ether ($-\text{O}-$), thioether ($-\text{S}-$) or amino ($-\text{NR}^A$) link wherein R^A is hydrogen or C₁-C₃ alkyl;

- 20 X represents an optionally substituted phenyl or 5- or 6-membered heteroaryl ring; and

n, m and p are independently 0 or 1, provided that at least one of n, m and p is 1 and the length of radical $-(\text{Alk}^1)_n-(\text{X})_m-(\text{Alk}^2)_p-$ is equivalent to that of a hydrocarbon chain of from 2-10 carbon atoms;

25

R₁₂ is hydrogen and R₂ is (a) an optional substituent or (b) a radical of formula $-(\text{Alk}^3)_r-\text{Q}$ wherein r is 0 or 1, Alk³ represents an optionally substituted, straight or branched, C₁-C₆ alkylene, C₂-C₆ alkenylene or C₂-C₆ alkynylene

radical and Q is hydrogen or an optionally substituted carbocyclic or heterocyclic group; or R_1^2 and R_2 taken together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form an optionally substituted carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring;

5

R_1^3 is hydrogen and R_3 is (i) an optional substituent or (ii) a radical of formula $-(Alk^3)_r-Q$ wherein r is 0 or 1, Alk^3 represents an optionally substituted, straight or branched, C_1-C_6 alkylene, C_2-C_6 alkenylene or C_2-C_6 alkynylene radical and Q is hydrogen or an optionally substituted carbocyclic or heterocyclic group; or R_1^3 and R_3 taken together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form an optionally substituted carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring; and

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R_4 is hydrogen or C_1-C_6 alkyl.

15

2. A compound as claimed in claim 1 wherein the group Z in R_1 is a hydroxamate group $-C(=O)NHOH$ or N-hydroxyformylamino group $-N(OH)C(=O)H$.

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3. A compound as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the length of the radical $-(Alk^1)_n-(X)_m-(Alk^2)_p-$ in R_1 is equivalent to a chain of from 2 to 10 carbons, or 4 to 9 carbons, or 5 to 8 carbons.

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4. A compound as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the length of the radical $-(Alk^1)_n-(X)_m-(Alk^2)_p-$ in R_1 is equivalent to a chain of 6 carbons.

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5. A compound as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein, in radical R_1 , Z is $-(C=O)NH(OH)$, p is 1 and Alk^2 is $-CH_2-O-CH_2-$, $-CH_2-S-CH_2-$, $-CH_2-NH-CH_2-$, $-CH_2CH(OH)-$, $-CH_2CH(F)-$, $-CH_2C(F)_2-$, or $-CH_2C(=O)-$.

30

6. A compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4 wherein in the radical $-(Alk^1)_n-(X)_m-(Alk^2)_p-$, Alk^1 and Alk^2 when present independently represent an unsubstituted, unbranched, C_1-C_6 alkylene, C_2-C_6 alkenylene or C_2-C_6 alkynylene radical.

7. A compound as claimed in claim 6 wherein in the radical $-(\text{Alk}^1)_n(\text{X})_m-(\text{Alk}^2)_p$, Alk^1 and Alk^2 when present independently represent $-\text{CH}_2-$, $-\dot{\text{C}}\text{H}_2\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$, $-\text{CH}=\text{CHCH}_2-$,
 5 $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$, $\text{CH}_2\text{CH}=\text{CHCH}_2-\text{C}\equiv\text{C}-$, $-\text{C}\equiv\text{CCH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{C}\equiv\text{C}-$ or $-\text{CH}_2\text{C}\equiv\text{CCH}_2-$.
8. A compound as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein, in the radical $-(\text{Alk}^1)_n(\text{X})_m-(\text{Alk}^2)_p$, X when present represents an unsubstituted
 10 phenyl ring.
9. A compound as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein the linker radical $-(\text{Alk}^1)_n(\text{X})_m-(\text{Alk}^2)_p$, m is 0 and n and/or p is/are 1.
- 15 10. A compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4 wherein the linker radical $-(\text{Alk}^1)_n(\text{X})_m-(\text{Alk}^2)_p$ is an unsubstituted, unbranched, saturated hydrocarbon chain of 4 to 9 carbons, or 5 to 8 carbons, or 6 carbons..
- 20 11. A compound as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein R_1 is hydrogen and R_2 is trifluoromethyl, methyl, ethyl n- and iso-propyl, methoxy, ethoxy, methylenedioxy, ethylenedioxy, amino, mono- and di-methylamino, mono- and di-ethylamino, nitro, cyano, fluoro, chloro, bromo, or methylsulfonylamino.
- 25 12. A compound as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein R_1 is hydrogen and R_2 is a radical of formula $-(\text{Alk}^3)_r\text{Q}$ wherein r is 0 or 1; Alk^3 is $-\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$, $-\text{CH}=\text{CHCH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$, $\text{CH}_2\text{CH}=\text{CHCH}_2-\text{C}\equiv\text{C}-$, $-\text{C}\equiv\text{CCH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{C}\equiv\text{C}-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{C}\equiv\text{CCH}_2-$ or $-\text{CH}_2\text{W}-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{W}-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{WCH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{WCH}_2\text{CH}_2-$,
 30 $-\text{CH}_2\text{WCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{WCH}_2-$, or $-\text{WCH}_2\text{CH}_2-$ where W is $-\text{O}-$, $-\text{S}-$, $-\text{NH}-$ or $-\text{N}(\text{CH}_3)-$; and Q is hydrogen or an optionally substituted phenyl, pyridyl, pyrimidinyl, thienyl, furanyl, cyclopropyl, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl, piperidinyl, or morpholinyl.

13. A compound as claimed in claim 12 wherein Q is phenyl, 4-pyridyl, or pyrimidin-2-yl.

14. A compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 10 wherein R^1_2 and R_2 taken together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form an optionally substituted carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring.

15. A compound as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein R^1_3 is hydrogen and R_3 is trifluoromethyl, methyl, ethyl, n- or iso-propyl, methoxy, ethoxy, methylenedioxy, ethylenedioxy, amino, mono- and di-methylamino, mono- or di-ethylamino, nitro, cyano, fluoro, chloro, bromo, or methylsulfonylamino.

16. A compound as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein R^1_3 is hydrogen and R_3 is a radical of formula $-(Alk^3)_r-Q$ wherein r is 0 or 1; Alk^3 is $-CH_2-$, $-CH_2CH_2-$, $-CH_2CH_2CH_2-$, $-CH_2CH_2CH_2CH_2-$, $-CH=CH-$, $-CH=CHCH_2-$, $-CH_2CH=CH-$, $CH_2CH=CHCH_2-C\equiv C-$, $-C\equiv CCH_2-$, $-CH_2C\equiv C-$, $-CH_2C\equiv CCH_2-$ or $-CH_2W-$, $-CH_2CH_2W-$, $-CH_2CH_2WCH_2-$, $-CH_2WCH_2CH_2-$, $-CH_2WCH_2CH_2WCH_2-$ or $-WCH_2CH_2-$ where W is $-O-$, $-S-$, $-NH-$ or $-N(CH_3)-$; and Q is hydrogen or optionally substituted phenyl, pyridyl, pyrimidinyl, thienyl, furanyl, cyclopropyl, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl, piperidinyl, or morpholinyl.

17. A compound as claimed in claim 16 wherein Q is phenyl, 4-pyridyl, or pyrimidin-2-yl.

18. A compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 14 wherein R^1_3 and R_3 taken together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form an optionally substituted carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring.

19. A compound as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein R_4 is hydrogen, methyl, ethyl or n- or iso-propyl.

20. A compound as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein optional substituents in the fused rings A^1 and A^2 are selected from

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trifluoromethyl, methyl, ethyl n- and iso-propyl, methoxy, ethoxy, methylenedioxy, ethylenedioxy, amino, mono- and di-methylamino, mono- and di-ethylamino, nitro, cyano, fluoro, chloro, bromo, and methylsulfonylamino.

- 5 21. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound as claimed in any of the preceding claims, together with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
22. The use of a compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 20 in the
10 preparation of a composition for inhibiting the activity of an HDAC enzyme
23. The use as claimed in claim 23 for the inhibition of HDAC1 activity.
24. The use as claimed in claim 22 or claim 23 for the inhibition of HDAC
15 activity, *ex vivo* or *in vivo*.
25. The use of a compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 20 in the preparation of a composition for the treatment of cell-proliferation disease, polyglutamine disease, neurogenerative disease, autoimmune disease, organ
20 transplant rejection, diabetes, haematological disorders or infection.
26. The use as claimed in claim 25 wherein the disease is cancer, Huntingdon disease, or Alzheimer disease.
- 25 27. A method for the treatment of a condition selected from the group consisting of cell-proliferation disease, polyglutamine disease, neurogenerative disease, autoimmune disease, organ transplant rejection, diabetes, haematological disorders and infection, which method comprises administering to a subject suffering such disease an effective amount of a
30 compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 19.
28. A method as claimed in claim 27 wherein the disease is cancer, Huntingdon disease, or Alzheimer disease.